

FOREWORD

The policy manual is the property of the *[your agency]* and shall be returned when members terminate their employment. Further, members shall not show the manual to anyone other than department personnel, unless I otherwise direct. This manual cannot cover every aspect of law-enforcement work or provide guidance in handling every possible situation. Rather, officers must use their experience, training, and good judgement to decide the best and safest way of handling any problem, consistent with these directives.

I expect all personnel to abide by these directives as the best method for achieving consistent and uniform enforcement of the law. If personnel depart from these orders, then they should be prepared to justify their actions. All departures from these directives may be investigated. In some instances, disciplinary action may result. In other instances, it may be necessary to revise directives to better support officers' performance in volatile situations in the future.

I shall issue each member of the department with a copy of this manual, hereinafter called the *[your agency]* policy manual. Members shall keep it in good condition and make deletions or additions as ordered.

Whenever members doubt the meaning or intent of a directive, they shall seek an interpretation or explanation from me through their supervisors.

All previously issued rules, policies, and procedures inconsistent or in conflict with this manual are hereby revoked.

Much research and preparation were performed in constructing this manual. I hope it will help you to understand what I expect of your performance as a law-enforcement officer.

Date: _____
Chief of Police/Sheriff

The section below is quoted from *Guidebook for the Law Enforcement Manual Development*, 1980, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, with permission).

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE MANUAL

A complete, well-written, up-to-date policy and procedures manual is an extremely important component of a modern law enforcement agency. Such a manual provides you, the law enforcement executive, with a number of advantages.

One advantage which the manual can provide is in the area of civil liability. A carefully written manual can help protect you from civil actions for vicarious liability. Specifically, the manual can demonstrate that you have shown due regard in directing the actions of your personnel.

But by far the most important advantage to having a complete, well-written manual is that it provides a means by which you can clearly establish the lines of authority and accountability in your department; set direction of your department; and maintain its status as an efficient, responsive agency.

The very task of planning and writing a manual encourages management personnel to address issues which are essential to building and maintaining a top quality law enforcement agency. In particular, formally establishing policies and regulations for inclusion in the manual reduces the tendency to write policies and procedures only in response to an emergent crisis. Thus, the task of planning and writing a manual is a step in the direction of rational, goal-oriented management and away from management by crisis.

But the policy and procedures manual is more than an aid to rational policy making. It is a communications tool. The written policies, procedures and regulations contained in the manual describe the department's goals and objectives. It informs your personnel of their responsibilities and indicates what is expected of them. It outlines methods of accomplishing tasks and establishes general performance standards.

Successfully communicating your expectations to members of your department is an essential first step to establishing discipline and accountability. The manual accomplishes this in a comprehensive, efficient manner. A manual can reduce the need for disciplinary action merely by stating and clarifying regulations. It can also underline the fairness of disciplinary action by providing a grounds for initiating such action.

Finally, the manual serves as a central repository of all departmental rules and regulations. This can make it easier for management personnel to achieve consistency in command decisions. It also provides you with an overview of all policies and procedures within your department. This

allows you to determine if existing policies and procedures are consistent with the direction you have set for your department. On the basis of your assessment, you can institute change as needed.